

TEACHER'S CORNER – APRIL 2016

PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions can often be confusing for students learning English. Many prepositions cannot be defined in the exact way that other parts of speech or vocabulary in English can, which makes them tricky to teach. Despite this, prepositions are very common in spoken and written English. Therefore, teachers should devote time to practicing these words in the classroom.

This month, we'll take a look at many different classroom activities that provide learners with opportunities to practice using some of the most common prepositions in English. To begin, let's take note of the prepositions used in this month's activities.

Prepositions of Time:

These prepositions are used to discuss when events take place, as well as to talk about multiple events happening at the same time.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
in	in + a specific month in + a specific year in + the morning, afternoon, or evening	My birthday is <i>in</i> July. I was born <i>in</i> 1985. I have to work <i>in</i> the afternoon.
at	at + a specific time at + night	I have to work <i>at</i> 7:30 tomorrow. I have to work <i>at</i> night.
on	on + a specific day of the week on + a specific date	I do not have to work <i>on</i> Sunday. I was born <i>on</i> July 6, 1985.
for	for + a duration of time	I have worked at my job <i>for</i> a year. I have lived here <i>for</i> ten months. I have been working <i>for</i> three hours.
since	since + a specific time something began	I have had my job <i>since</i> June 6 th . I have lived here <i>since</i> August 2010. I have been working <i>since</i> 9:00.
while	while + activities taking place at the same	<i>While</i> I was working, I studied.

	time	I cooked dinner <i>while</i> I was watching TV.
during	during + the time something happened (noun)	It rained <i>during</i> the night. She took a phone call <i>during</i> class. He took notes <i>during</i> the presentation.

Prepositions of Place:

These prepositions are used to tell where something is located in relation to something else.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
above	The (object or place) is (preposition) the (other object or place).	The clock is <i>above</i> the door.
around		The classroom is <i>around</i> the corner.
behind		The chair is <i>behind</i> the desk.
below		The door is <i>below</i> the clock.
beside		The restroom is <i>beside</i> the office.
far (away) from		The school is <i>far away from</i> the farm.
in		The fruit is <i>in</i> the bag.
in the back of		The table is <i>in the back of</i> the room.
in front of		The teacher is <i>in front of</i> the students.
in the middle of		The students are <i>in the middle of</i> the hallway.
inside		The teacher is <i>inside</i> the classroom.
near		The chair is <i>near</i> the door.
next to		The restroom is <i>beside</i> the office.
on		The office is <i>on</i> the second floor.
on top of		The book is <i>on top of</i> the notebook.
outside		The students are <i>outside</i> the classroom.
under		The paper is <i>under</i> the book.

One special case is the preposition *between*, which is used with two objects.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
between	<p>The (object or place) is <i>between</i> the (other object or place) and the (other object or place).</p> <p>The (object or place) is <i>between</i> the (other objects or places).</p>	<p>The book is <i>between</i> the cup and the pencils.</p> <p>The restroom is <i>between</i> the office and the playground.</p> <p>The office is <i>between</i> the classrooms.</p> <p>The desk is <i>between</i> the chairs.</p>

Prepositions of Movement:

These prepositions are used to discuss movement *to* or *from* a place. They are often used in the imperative to give directions from one place to another.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
across	(Verb) (preposition) (name of object or place).	Walk <i>across</i> the street.
along		He ran <i>along</i> the trail.
around		She walked <i>around</i> the puddle.
away from		Walk <i>away from</i> the post office.
back to		Please go <i>back to</i> your seat.
down		They were coming <i>down</i> the stairs.
into		Please go <i>into</i> the classroom.
off		She stepped <i>off</i> the train.
onto		The singer walked <i>onto</i> the stage.
out of		He ran <i>out of</i> the house.
over		Cross <i>over</i> Oak Street.
past		He drove <i>past</i> the school.
through		The boys ran <i>through</i> the park.
towards		I am riding my bike <i>towards</i> the store.
under		The girls stopped <i>under</i> the bridge.
up		I am coming <i>up</i> the stairs.

This month's Teacher's Corner will require students to use prepositions of time, place, and movement to complete different tasks. Use these descriptions and examples included here to review the prepositions with your students before starting each activity.